

**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN
INFORMATION & NEWS UPDATE - 147
16th December 2009**

Vetting and Barring Scheme – Drawing The Line (14/12/09)

Sir Roger Singleton, Chief Adviser on the Safety of Children and Chair of the ISA, was asked to check that the line was drawn in the right place in relation to those who have to register with the scheme because of the frequent or intensive nature of their contact with children. In this report, he recommends that private arrangements between parents and friends should continue to remain outside the scheme. But where an organisation makes the decisions on which adults should work with their children then the requirement to register will apply.

Ed Balls has accepted all of Sir Roger's recommendations and it is estimated that the number of people required to register will fall from 11m to 9m.

Sir Roger's recommendations include:

- Where organisations such as schools, clubs or groups make the decisions as to which adults should work with their children then the requirement to register with the VBS should apply, subject to the frequent and intensive contact provisions.
- The frequent contact test should be met if the work with children takes place once a week or more (at present the test is if activity happens as often as once a month). The intensive contact test should be met if the work takes place on 4 days in 1 month or more or overnight (this change is designed to make the scheme easier to understand and put into practice, since at present the test is 3 times in every 30 days or overnight).



- Individuals who go into different schools or similar settings to work with different groups of children should not be required to register unless their contact with the same children is frequent or intensive.
- The minimum age of registration for young people who engage in regulated activity as part of their continuing education should be reviewed. The Government will make immediate changes to the rules so that 16, 17 and 18-year-olds in education will not be required to register.
- Overseas visitors bringing their own groups of children to the UK e.g. to international camps or the Olympics, should have a three months exemption from the requirement to register for the work they do with children they have brought to the UK.
- Exchange visits lasting less than 28 days, where overseas parents accept the responsibility for the selection of the host family, should be regarded as private arrangements and will not require registration.

http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/news/content.cfm?landing=vetting_and_barring_scheme_two_million_fewer_adults_required_to_register&type=1

http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2009_0250

http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2009_0247

<http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-01122-2009&>

<http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/DCSF-01122-2009.pdf>

Children's Trusts: Improving support for schools (Dec 09)

Children's Trusts have been strengthened through the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009. Every local area is required to have a statutory Children's Trust Board with statutory responsibility for producing the local strategic Children and Young People's Plan. Children's Trusts have also been strengthened through the addition of new relevant partners, including schools.

This leaflet will:

- help schools understand their role as statutory partners to the Children's Trust
- describe briefly the new legislation
- explain what Children's Trusts are and why they are necessary

<http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-01113-2009&>

<http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/01113-2009LEF-EN.pdf>

Child Performance Review (14/12/09)

Children's Secretary Ed Balls and Culture Secretary Ben Bradshaw have announced that Sarah Thane, former chair of the Royal Television Society and former advisor to Ofcom, will review the 40 year old rules governing child performance.

The review comes after informal discussions with interested parties e.g. children's organisations, broadcasters, producers and LAs, found that regulations are outdated and that there is also a case for conducting a broader review of the overall framework.

http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2009_0251

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/safeguardingandsocialcare/safeguardingchildren/childperformers/childperformers/>

The Impact of the Commercial World on Children's Well-being: Report of an independent assessment (14/12/09)

This report says there is a debate between those who see children as victims, and those who see children as confident, media-savvy consumers. While there are risks and a need for appropriate safeguards, the commercial world and media offers great opportunities for learning, social development and enjoyment. It says children and parents need help in acquiring the skills to exploit these opportunities whilst staying safe.

The Government will support and facilitate tackling the issues raised in the report by:

- promoting greater media literacy – looking at how schools can boost online skills and teach safety online through UKCCIS strategy;
- setting up a panel to see what place there is in the curriculum for further media literacy skills;
- updating 'myguide,' website for parents to give advice on everything e.g. 'phishing', spam, chat rooms and music sharing to help them tackle the commercial messages that their children engage in;
- exploring the scope for developing a set of voluntary principles to underpin marketing and promotion of food and drink to children, particularly where mandatory self and co-regulatory regimes do not exist; and
- the CMO is this week publishing his guidelines on the health affects and risks of children drinking alcohol

http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2009_0251

<http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00669-2009&>

<http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/00669-2009DOM-EN.pdf>

‘Children’s Plan: Two Years On: A progress report’ (14/12/09)

This report shows how DCSF policies have made a difference to children’s services, including:

- over 3,000 Sure Start Children’s Centres – offering integrated services to over 2.4m children under 5 and their families;
- free early learning and childcare places for disadvantaged 2-year-olds – more than 20,000 places now offer to 15% of the most disadvantaged two-year-olds;
- over 4,000 people now trained as Early Years Professionals;
- 1 to 1 tuition through the Making Good Progress pilot - funding was made available to the 450 schools to deliver one-to-one tuition in English and mathematics to 10% of their pupils at KS 2 and 3;
- 97,000 young people working towards an apprenticeship;
- 850 new play sites across the country;
- 90% of schools offering extended services – services include study support, before and after school activities, childcare, parenting and family support, access to specialist health and social care services, and community facilities such as adult and family learning;
- over 2,000 families supported by Family Intervention Projects, providing intensive support to the most challenging families, and tackling issues like substance misuse, domestic violence, poverty, anti-social behaviour, crime and truancy.

The report sets out next steps that will mean:

- new guarantees for parents and children of what they can expect from all our services, so that parents’ and children’s needs are at the heart of everything we do;
- great leadership that innovates, to drive ever greater improvement and shares knowledge across the system, supporting all children to realise their potential;

- a highly skilled and professional workforce across all our services for children and young people, which can ensure no child is left behind; and; and
- partnerships within and between schools and children’s services – because no one can deliver for children alone and services need to work together if they are to intervene early and successfully.

<http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-01162-2009>
<http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/01162-2009-Final.pdf>
http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2009_0251
<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/childrensplan>

Your child, your schools, our future: Timetable for action (Dec 09)

Booklets for primary and secondary schools, summarise the Timetable for Action (04/12/09) which set out detailed plans for delivering a 21st century schools system.

The Government's goal is:

- a world class education for all underpinned by Pupil and Parent Guarantees
- excellent teaching and learning and the extra help each child needs;
- every school working in partnership, integrating services and sharing expertise;
- all schools improving, with accountability, and rapid intervention when needed;
- every school and school leader supported, with the right roles for local and central government.

<http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-01163-2009>
<http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-01164-2009>
http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2009_0251

Focus on gifted pupils and the whole school benefits (11/12/09)

Having an effective programme in place for gifted and talented pupils is not elitist. Schools that ensure all pupils, including gifted and talented, are suitably challenged find that all pupils benefit.

As one headteacher told inspectors, in thinking more about the needs of gifted and talented pupils, it helped to add rigour to lesson planning and teaching for all pupils throughout the school. The report, *Gifted and talented pupils in schools*, reveals that although most of the 26 schools visited recognised that improving provision for gifted and talented pupils was important, it was not their highest priority. All had a policy for gifted and talented pupils but many of them were generic and these were not sufficiently effective in improving performance.

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/News/Focus-on-gifted-pupils-and-the-whole-school-benefits>

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/content/download/10575/126476/file/Gifted%20and%20talented%20pupils%20in%20schools.doc>

Young people can shape spaces too (11/12/09)

Spaceshaper, which captures local views about parks and public spaces, has had an imaginative and colourful makeover for young people. The new version of the activity-based toolkit has been developed for young people aged 9-14, because they are often left out of decisions that affect their lives. It explores what young people think about how local places are used and how they can be improved.

<http://www.cabe.org.uk/news/young-people-shape-spaces-too>

<http://www.cabe.org.uk/public-space/spaceshaper-9-14>

Aiming high for disabled children: improving data (15/12/09)

York Health Economics Consortium were commissioned by the DH to explore how data on disabled children is collected, managed and used at a local level. The focus of the research was fieldwork across 8 health economies in England, underpinned by a review of peer-reviewed literature. The report of the research project sets out key findings on:

- the definitions of disability used by different agencies and services
- the information about disabled children that is captured.
- how such information is collected and stored.
- how such information is shared.

The report includes a number of effective practice recommendations, including for organisations delivering services for disabled children at a local level.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_110094

<http://php.york.ac.uk/inst/yhec/?q=content/disabled-children-improving-data>

Swine Flu Vaccination: Information for parents of children over 6 months and under 5 years old (15/12/09)

All children over 6 months and under 5 years of age are now being offered the swine flu vaccine. This leaflet has been developed to provide parents and carers with information about the vaccination.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_110066

http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/@ps/@sta/@perf/documents/digitalasset/dh_110065.pdf

GCSE Attainment by Pupil Characteristics 2008/09 (15/12/09)

Schools Minister Vernon Coaker welcomed new figures showing the attainment gap between boys and girls, and between those on free school meals and their peers has narrowed over the last 12 months. The provisional 2009 national GCSE figures in October, showed 50.9% of pupils got 5 or more A-C GCSEs including English and maths (47.8% In 08).

Today's provisional statistics show:

- improvement has quickened with the gap narrowing by 0.9% since 08 to 54.5% for girls and 47.3% of boys.
- overall attainment has risen for all ethnic groups – with strong rises in attainment for black (4.4%) and mixed groups (4.6%) since 08 compared with a national rise of 3.1%. Attainment gaps have narrowed for most under-performing ethnic groups.
- the proportion of FSM pupils gaining expected level rose by 3.4% – a faster improvement than the 3.1% rise for non-FSM pupils. The gap between FSM and non-FSM pupils continues to narrow slowly – but remains a top priority.
- English as an Additional Language: 47.9% of pupils with English as an additional language are reaching the GCSE benchmark – but the gap between pupils with native speakers held steady at 3.3%.
- 16.8% of all pupils with SEN (both with and without statements of SEN) passed the basic benchmark – up 3.8 ppts compared to a 3.7 ppt rise for non-SEN pupils – with significant improvement in the performance of autistic pupils this year.

http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/news/content.cfm?landing=gap_narrows_between_fsm_pupils_and_their_peers_in_gcse_attainment&type=1
<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000900/index.shtml>

Disengagement from Education among 14 to 16-year-olds (15/12/09)

This research sought to identify a typology of engaged / disengaged young people using information on their behaviours, attitudes and motivations available in the Longitudinal study of young people in England (LSYPE.)

- What are the main types of engaged / disengaged young people in England, and what proportion of young people do they represent? Are the groups stable over time?
- What are the important factors for predicting whether someone is likely to be disengaged?
- What factors are important for helping their engagement?

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/research/programmeofresearch/projectinformation.cfm?projectId=15674&type=5&resultspage=1>

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/DCSF-RB178.pdf>

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/DCSF-RR178.pdf>

Education for sustainable development is making a difference (16/12/09)

Ofsted has released the findings of a 3-year inspection programme looking at improvement in education for sustainable development in a selection of schools.

The small-scale survey reveals that a focus on sustainable development is not only having a direct impact on the actions of pupils and their families but on the wider community. It also shows that schools themselves are reaping benefits from improved provision through cost savings and better behaviour.

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/News/Education-for-sustainable-development-is-making-a-difference>
<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/content/download/10581/126545/file/Education%20for%20sustainable%20development.doc>

Government response to the Teenage Pregnancy Independent Advisory Group's sixth annual report (15/12/09)

Children's Minister Dawn Primarolo and Public Health Minister, Gillian Merron welcomed the Teenage Pregnancy Independent Advisory Group's 6th annual report and will respond next year.

They called on LAs and PCTs to continue prioritising the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy beyond Dec 2010 – putting a particular focus on improving sex and relationships education in and out of schools and helping sexually active teenagers use contraception effectively. In addition to £45m provided for improved contraceptive services over the last 2 years, local areas have received support through the Contraception Worth Talking About campaign (30/11/09). Legislation is to make SRE compulsory from Sept 11.

The Strategy has seen a 10.5% reduction in under 18 conception rates with teenage births at the lowest level for 15 years. Most recent quarterly data from 2008 shows a further downward trend. LAs and PCTs that prioritise teenage pregnancy and fully implement the strategy have seen much bigger reductions of over 25% - showing that change is possible even in deprived areas.

The current Strategy is based on the best international evidence, which demonstrates that comprehensive SRE, plus effective contraception, can bring down teenage conception rates. This evidence, together with learning from local areas and views of young people and parents will inform the next phase of the Strategy, which will be published at the end of February.
http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2009_0253
<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/download/?id=7166>

Parental experiences of services provided to disabled children: 2009-10 (15/12/09)

New figures show an increase in parental satisfaction for services for disabled children in 2009-10. The findings come from the 2nd national sample survey of parents of disabled children in England July - Nov 09. For the first time this year the figures include scores for LAs and PCTs so parents can compare their local area with the national score.

Key points:

- The data is being collected through a questionnaire to parents asking for their views of health, education and care and family support services for their disabled child as experienced in the preceding 12 months
- The framework for the questionnaire is the AHDC core offer standards on information, transparency, assessment, participation and feedback
- This survey provides an overall national score on parental experience (between 0 and 100) for 2009-10. The national overall score increased from 59 points in 2008-09 to 61 points in 2009-10.
- This survey also provides, for the first time, figures for 145 LAs and 150 PCTs. The overall scores ranged from 55 to 68 points across LAs and from 55 to 68 points across PCTs.
- Published national and local level data provide a breakdown by the 15 sub-indicators (i.e. each of the five core offer standards as they apply to each of the three broad service areas of health, education and care and family support)

http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2009_0254

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/STR/d000902/index.shtml>

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/STR/d000902/SRNI542009-10TextUpdated.pdf>

The Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) (Guernsey) Order 2009 SI 3125

This extends Part 5 Police Act 1997 as amended, to Guernsey. Part 5 allows the Secretary of State to issue 3 levels of certificate:

- a criminal conviction certificate
- a criminal record certificate and
- an enhanced criminal record certificate

The Secretary of State's functions under Part 5 in England and Wales are exercised by the CRB.


The Order will enable individuals in Guernsey to apply to the CRB for the 3 levels of certificate. It also provides for the Home Department of the States of Guernsey to register with the Secretary of State as a "registered person" for the purpose of countersigning or transmitting applications for criminal record certificates and enhanced criminal record certificates. Individuals in Guernsey will be able to apply for these certificates through the Home Department of the States of Guernsey instead of through a registered body in England and Wales.

The basic level of criminal conviction certificate is not yet available in England and Wales.

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2009/pdf/uksi_20093215_en.pdf

Raising the Participation Age: supporting local areas to deliver

The RPA means that all young people will continue in education or training to 17 from 2013 and to 18 from 2015.

This publication brings together key commitments from recent Departmental reports and strategies, and signals the next steps required in preparing for successful delivery of full participation. 

There is a lot to be done over the next 4 years. Boosted by the impetus of the September Guarantee, many LAs and their partners have already driven up participation rates. The DCSF will shortly be publishing their strategy to increase the proportion of 16-24 year olds in education, employment or training to continue the immediate focus on this.

The current economic picture makes it imperative to link local NEET strategies with an understanding of the group of young people in employment without accredited training. And local areas working with schools also need to improve the experiences of the young people in secondary schools now – in Years 7 and 8 – who will be the first to be affected by RPA.

<http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-01134-2009&http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/01134-2009.pdf>

Executive Summary

<http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-01135-2009&http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/01135-2009.pdf>

Video Recordings Bill (15/12/09)

This Bill aims to restore public protections around the supply and classification of age-rated films and video games is published. It is designed to correct an anomaly that means the Video Recordings Act 1984 is not enforceable in UK courts.

<http://nds.coi.gov.uk/content/detail.aspx?NewsAreaId=2&ReleaseID=409640&SubjectId=2>

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/videorecordings.html>

http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/media_releases/6526.aspx

Address flat-screen safety before accidents rise (09/12/09)

RoSPA is raising awareness of the need to ensure that such television sets cannot be easily pulled over by children.

A US study (1990 – 2007) found that an average of nearly 15,000 under-18s visited emergency departments annually for injuries received from furniture “tip-overs”.

According to the study:

- ¾ of the injuries were among under 7s
- nearly ½ resulted from TVs tipping over
- Over ¼ of injuries happened when children pulled over or climbed on furniture
- there was a 40% + increase in furniture tip-over injuries during the study period, and the injury rate also rose.

RoSPA recommends that:

- Free-standing, flat-screen televisions are placed on a wide, stable, manufacturers’ base (designed to accompany the television), which reduces the risk of the screen toppling forwards. In addition, tethering straps should run from the top of the back of the screen to a stable anchoring point, such as a wall-mounted bracket
- Wall-mounted televisions are securely fixed to solid walls. Where internal walls are made of plasterboard, the fixing brackets should be attached to underlying wooden studs. If in any doubt about this, make use of the services of a skilled tradesperson or qualified installer
- As much as possible, children are kept out of the way while bulky, heavy objects, such as televisions, are being moved
- Children - particularly toddlers – are discouraged from pulling themselves up by holding on to a television set or furniture on which a television sits, or from climbing over a television.

http://www.rospa.com/news/releases/2009/pr747_09_12_09_home.htm

MPs critical of home education proposals (16/12/09)

Flaws in the Government’s proposals on home education must be tackled, concludes the Children, Schools and Families Committee in a report published today. The report urges the Government to learn lessons from its handling of the Badman review of elective home education and pushes for more precise monitoring by local authorities.

The report recommends:

- the introduction of a light touch, voluntary registration scheme for home-educating families, to be reviewed after 2 years
- better information-sharing between local authorities and other agencies on child data
- urgent action to clarify LAs’ responsibilities for home-educated children with special educational needs, and better training for staff in this area
- a statement of educational approach to be provided by home-educating families, supplemented by annual meetings with LAs officers
- the introduction of a revised, more precise definition of what constitutes a suitable education

Basic data on numbers of home educated children are lacking, and LAs urgently require better methods of obtaining accurate data. The Government should use the Children, Schools and Families Bill to provide a definitive statement of the applicability of the Children Act 2004 and the ECM outcomes to home-educated children.

<http://news.parliament.uk/2009/12/mps-critical-of-home-education-proposals/>
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/200910/cmselect/cmchilsch/39/3902.htm>


A stronger voice and more support for parents of children with special educational needs (16/12/09)

Responding particularly to the recommendations on the SEN system in Brian Lamb's final report on parental confidence, Ed Balls reasserted his commitment to listen to parents and provide them with the advice, information and support they need.

While Brian Lamb found that most parents of children with SEN are happy with the support and education their children receive, the Government agrees with him that more should be done to ensure all parents have access to excellent services.

Ed Balls also agrees that we need to be more ambitious for children with SEN and disabilities. He supports Brian Lamb's call for a cultural shift in the way in which schools, LAs and other professionals work with parents and children.

Today's announcements focus on making the SEN system better for children with SEN and their parents:

- a national SEN helpline to provide independent, expert advice and information directly to parents
 - new pilots which will look at how children's needs are assessed and the transparency of local authority decision-making to give parents more confidence that decisions are made in the best interests of their child
 - strengthened independent appeals panels on exclusions and improved statutory guidance for schools on excluding children with SEN
 - strengthening of local Parent Partnership Services by ensuring all advisors are trained in SEN and disability law
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- codes of practice for professionals providing advice on a child's assessment will be reviewed, to make clear that advice should always put the needs of the child first rather than availability of resources
- work with the MoJ and key stakeholders to review the exceptional funding scheme for providing legal aid for tribunal hearings
- funding for the Local Government Ombudsman to take complaints from parents unhappy with the support they receive, giving parents greater redress
- funding for the Anti-Bullying Alliance, to identify best practice in tackling and preventing SEN and disability-related bullying.

This follows the significant improvements to the SEN system already made by Government following earlier reports from Brian Lamb, including:

- £38m investment in improving outcomes for children with SEN
- a duty on Ofsted to report on the progress of children with SEN in school inspections
- a right of appeal for parents unhappy with the review of their child's statement.

http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/news/content.cfm?landing=a_stronger_voice_and_more_support_for_parents_of_children_with_special_educational_needs&type=1

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/lambinquiry/>

LGiU and CPSP form new partnership (10/12/09)

The Centre for Public Service Partnerships and the Local Government Information Unit are joining forces as a social enterprise in the New Year. The partnership will be known as CPSP @ LgiU. It will work with and across local and central government, the NHS, education and the wider public sector.

<https://member.lgiu.org.uk/media/pressreleases/Pages/101209.aspx>

Government to allow wider use of 20 mph schemes without speed humps (16/12/09)

The Government is encouraging local councils to introduce 20 mph schemes into residential streets and other roads where cycle and pedestrian traffic is high, such as around schools, shops and parks.

In the past, councils wanting to implement 20 mph schemes on groups of roads have had to do so in 'zones' which require traffic calming measures such as speed humps. 20 mph limits without traffic calming were only recommended on individual roads.

However, following a successful city-wide trial in Portsmouth, the Department for Transport plans to allow 20mph limits to be used across more streets where traffic speeds are already low without the need for such measures.

<http://nds.coi.gov.uk/content/detail.aspx?NewsAreaId=2&ReleaseID=409648&SubjectId=2>

Health Act 2009

The DH's Consultation on the Future of Tobacco Control (05/08) was a first step in developing a national control strategy that focused on 4 main areas, including protecting children and young people from smoking.

This Act includes amendments to the Tobacco Advertising and Promotion Act 2002, the Children and Young Persons (Protection from Tobacco) Act 1991 and the Children and Young Persons (Protection from Tobacco) (NI) Order 1991 which make further provision in relation to the display of tobacco products and the sale of such products from vending machines.

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2009/en/ukpgaen_20090021_en_1

News Articles

Mental health questionnaire for young service users (11/12/09)

The experiences of children and young people using mental health services may soon be measurable using a tool developed at King's College, London.

The Children and Adolescent Service Experience (ChASE) will ask service users aged nine to 17 and their main carers to complete 15 questions about their experiences of therapy. These will cover what young people thought of their therapist, what happened during their sessions, and whether they felt therapy had helped them.

Dr Crispin Day, head of the CAMHS Research Unit at King's College, said it was important to know how satisfied young service users were. "A poor experience of treatment is associated with poor mental health outcomes and early termination," he said.

<http://www.communitycare.co.uk/Articles/2009/12/11/113414/tool-to-gauge-childrens-experiences-of-mental-health-services.htm>

Child obesity trends 'suggest class divide is emerging' (15/12/09)

A widening class gap is likely to be seen in the coming years in childhood obesity, a study suggests.

Previous research has suggested rates in England may be levelling off, but a UCL team found this was happening most in children aged 2 to 10 from wealthier backgrounds. Researchers said obesity rates among the lower classes were likely to be significantly higher by 2015 - for girls the levels may even be double.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/8412796.stm>

Child protection worries over lack of powers to vet foreigners (14/12/09)

The head of the government's new vetting agency today raised concerns that foreigners will escape full checks designed to prevent abusers working with children and vulnerable adults.

There are "significant barriers" preventing government officials from obtaining details of criminal offences committed abroad, Sir Roger Singleton, chairman of the ISA, said.

Launching his independent review of the VBS, he said: "There are people from overseas coming to this country to work, and people from this country who have spent part of their time working abroad and then return. There's no doubt at all this is a continuing concern.

"I'm told the government is working with overseas administrations to try to ensure there's a better flow of information about people who have quite clearly committed offences abroad.

"I'm looking to see that work taken forward as quickly as possible, but there is no doubt that there are some particular difficulties.

"If you take the age of consent, it is 12 in Thailand, it is 16 in this country and 20 in California. What is the basis on which information is exchanged if something is regarded very differently in different countries?"

In his report Singleton said ministers had commissioned work to see if adults from overseas, or who have lived abroad, can be required to provide police certificates from the countries concerned when they apply to work with children or vulnerable adults.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2009/dec/14/child-protection-abuse-foreign-offenders>

Consultations

Implementation of the Service to Handle Parents and Young People's Complaints About School Matters (15/12/09)

This consultation seeks views on draft regulations underpinned by legislation in ss 206-224 Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 which extends the remit of the Local Government Ombudsman to enable investigation of complaints from parents and young people in relation to individual school matters.

The short consultation period is because the regulations must be in place if we are to begin testing the new service in April 2010.

Closing Date: 5th February 2010

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm?action=consultationDetails&consultationId=1691&external=no&menu=1>

Youth Support Services 11-25 and Learner Support Services 14-19 (09/12/09)

Consultation on revised guidance on youth support services for young people 11-25 issued in 2002 as Extending Entitlement.

This Guidance makes clear the requirements on LAs under S123 Learning and Skills Act 2000. It sets out the legal Direction and responsibilities for youth support services and the type of support and opportunities young people should expect. It also incorporates statutory guidance on duties created under S40 & 43 Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009, relating to Learner Support Services and the Learning Pathway Document.

Closing Date: 31st March 2010

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/consultations/childreanandyoungpeople/youthsupportlearnersupport/?lang=en>

School Improvement Partner regional consultation conferences

28th January 2010 London 10am-1pm
11th February 2010 Birmingham 10am-1pm
25th February 2010 Nottingham 10am-1pm

The National College is undertaking a joint consultation with the DCSF on the new role for SIPs following the publication of 'Your child, your schools, our future: building a 21st century schools system'.

We would like our key stakeholders to join us at one of 3 regional consultation conferences. These events, and your involvement in them, will help to shape the future of the SIP role.

We are looking for individuals from the following groups to participate:

- current or former headteachers
- accredited SIPs
- members of professional associations
- governors
- local authority representatives

The DCSF is enhancing the current SIP model and has asked us to develop this new approach and the associated accreditation and CPD arrangements. These changes represent a considerable opportunity.

Your views are vital to the development of the SIP role and we very much hope that you can join with other stakeholders who have been invited to attend.

<http://www.nationalcollege.org.uk/index/about-us/national-college-role/national-college-consultations/sipsconsultation.htm>

<http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=Cm+7588>

Conferences

Understanding fabricated and induced illness

12th March 2010 Plymouth £140 - £205
Recognition, assessment and management of FII is complex, emotionally demanding and raises immense challenges for effective multi-agency working. This course aims to explore best practice in the multi-agency response to safeguarding children in whom illness has been fabricated or induced with reference to the recent statutory guidance (HM Government 2008).

Presentations will be given by experts in the field, workshops directed by local multi-agency teams and the course material will include some of the learning resources commissioned by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (2009).

The course is aimed at professionals from multi-agency teams working with parents and carers including paediatricians, child and adolescent and adult mental health workers, police officers, social workers and education professionals.

<http://www.baspcan.org.uk/events.php>

Issues in safeguarding refugee children

15th April 2010 Preston £140 - £205
The day will be a combination of Key Note presentations and Workshops; the latter based either on research or on practice experience and local agencies will be invited who work with refugee children.

The purpose will be to bring together people working on the complex and difficult issues around child protection and refugee children, in research, policy and practice. Ongoing work at the UCLan and elsewhere will be the basis of the day and the knowledge will be shared across all sectors.

The invited Keynote speakers will raise the issues of well being and resettlement of refugee children in an asylum country; the causes of migration; the public policy controls in place; and social justice for refugee children.

<http://www.baspcan.org.uk/events.php>

Speaking up for children: the media and LSCBs – on the same side?

10th May 2010 Birmingham £140 - £205
Issues regarding the care and protection of children are always likely to interest the media and therefore the public. Some of the recent coverage has been negative, focusing on the failings in the systems and processes designed to safeguard children. This event is designed to support LSCBs in considering how to engage with the media in ways that are constructive and mutually beneficial. The conference will draw upon the expertise of professionals with experience of media reporting and commentating on children's issues.

The conference programme will include:

- presentations on ethical reporting from a journalist's perspective;
- advice on the issuing of press releases and statements on children's issues; and
- discussion of how LSCBs engage with the public through the media.

The conference is particularly aimed at Chairs and Managers of LSCBs; Senior Managers and Press Officers within LAs and Health Trusts; Journalists; and Professional Associations.

<http://www.baspcan.org.uk/events.php>

Conferences (continued)

School and Public Health Nurses

Associations training events

Safeguarding Young Runaways

14th January 2010 London

2nd February 2010 York

16th March 2010 Leicester

Safeguarding young people from sexual exploitation

15th January 2010 London

18th February 2010 York

17th March 2010 Leicester

Supporting young people at risk of substance abuse

19th January 2010 London

23rd February 2010 York

25th March 2010 Leicester

Supporting young people at risk from sexual harm

26th January 2010 London

4th March 2010 York

25th March 2010 Leicester

All £150 + VAT

<http://www.saphna-professionals.org/events>

Children in Wales Conferences

Child Accident Prevention

9th March 2010 Cardiff

Child Protection & Asylum/Refugee Children

17th March 2010 Cardiff

For further information, please contact

bookings@childreninwales.org.uk

<http://www.childreninwales.org.uk/Events/index.html>

Children & Young People On The Edge

Working Together: To Safeguard Society's Marginalised Children & Young People

16th March 2009 Leicester Free

This is the fourth national safeguarding conference and the event will include plenary sessions and seminars on the following topics:

- Voice of the Child
- Looked After Children
- Children and Sexual Exploitation
- Trafficking/Immigration
- Post Abuse Work
- Asylum Seekers/Refugees
- Homelessness
- Children with complex disabilities - communication

The conference will address key areas of work currently of high priority and we aim to share information about national developments in policy and the research and evidence base, and then to consider the opportunities and challenges for their implementation locally. We will also be organising a Best Practice Market Place inviting all regions to take part and exhibit examples of good practice or work in progress.

<http://www.saphna-professionals.org/node/192>

This weekly newsletter collates information from various sources that is relevant to safeguarding children. Anyone working in this area who would like to be added to the circulation list can forward their details to – keithdriver@btinternet.com